

C. Remarks

The claims are 1, 7, and 9, with claims 1 and 9 being independent. The independent claims have been amended to better define the invention. Support for this amendment may be found, for example, in Figs. 11A-11E and the corresponding disclosure in the specification, as well as at page 9, line 27, to page 10, line 2, page 12, lines 9-12 and 22-25, and page 23, lines 17-20. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the present claims is expressly requested.

Claims 1, 7, and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by, or under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly obvious from, JP 6-27302 (Baba) in view of the allegedly admitted prior art in Figs. 1C-1D. The grounds of rejection are respectfully traversed.

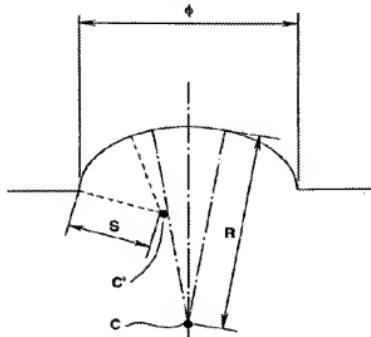
The Examiner alleged that Baba discloses a process, which is similar to the one presently claimed and would inherently anticipate it. In view of the plating parameters disclosed in Baba, it is alleged that a curvature radius would reach a minimum at some point and then continue increasing as electroplating proceeds.

To that end, the Examiner referred to Figs. 1C and 1D in the instant application, alleging that they show a prior art process. In particular, the Examiner stated that Fig. 1C shows that R_{min} would be expected and that the radius increases from the structure in Fig. 1C to the structure in Fig. 1D. The Examiner further stated that this is similar to what is shown in Figs. 3D and 3E, i.e., the curvature radius in Figs. 1C and 3D is smaller than in Figs. 1D and 3E, respectively. Applicants respectfully disagree.

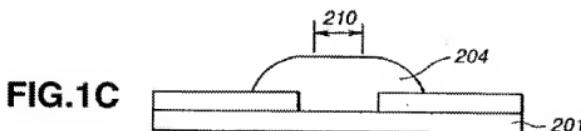
Based on the statements in the Office Action with respect to the relationship of the curvature radii in Figs. 1C and 1D and Figs. 3D and 3E, Applicants believe that the

definition of the claimed curvature radius R has not been properly understood. As shown in Fig. 2, the curvature radius R refers to the radius of the plated portion near its optical axis, which is different from radius S of the side surface of the lens:

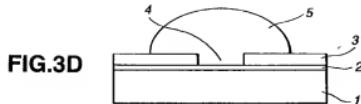
FIG.2



The structure shown in Fig. 1C does not have a curvature radius R as defined in the instant application, because the portion near the optical axis of the plated layer is flat:

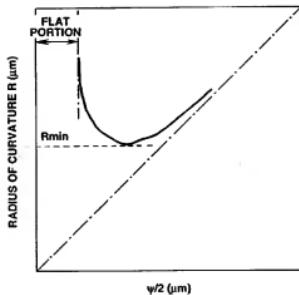


Thus, curvature radius R at the optical axis in Fig. 3D is larger than in Fig. 3E:



This is consistent with the information provided in Fig. 5, which shows that the curvature radius R in accordance with the present invention, once it is formed, first decreases to R_{\min} :

FIG.5



Therefore, R_{\min} is not inherent in the electroplating disclosed in Baba, i.e., electroplating in Baba can be terminated before R_{\min} is reached. As mentioned previously by Applicants, Baba does not disclose or suggest electroplating as presently claimed.

Terminating the plating after R_{\min} makes it easier to control the process to obtain the desired curvature radius, because the slope of the curve shown in Fig. 5 is

smaller after R_{min} than before R_{min} is reached. Furthermore, as mentioned previously by Applicants, electroplating through R_{min} results in a bright lens.

Furthermore, Baba does not disclose or suggest carrying out steps (e) to (g) as now recited in the claims. By providing a sacrificial layer in the process of forming the mold, it is possible to reduce manufacturing costs.

In sum, Applicants respectfully submit that the prior art fails to disclose or suggest all elements of the presently claimed invention. Thus, withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and expedient passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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